

THE
HASTINIAD,

K

AN

HEROIC POEM.

IN

THREE CANTOS.

L O N D O N :

PRINTED FOR J. DEBRET, OPPOSITE BURLINGTON-HOUSE, PICCADILLY.

M DCC LXXIV.

THE
HASTINGS

MEMORIAL

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T H C A N T O E



L O N D O N
PRINTED FOR J. BARNARD, OFFICE OF THE SURVEYOR-GENERAL, WHITEHALL.
M DCC LXXXV.

H A S T I N I A D;

HEROIC POEM.

CANTO THE FIRST.

I.

FROM me, oh! far, Apollo, turn

The streams of Satyr's venom'd urn;

Me who at courtly themes aspire,

Which ask not an indignant lyre.

II.

Let those who wealth and ease disclaim,

To win the empty bubble, Fame,

High wave the Nemean rod,

And range the tracts *Alcaeus trod.

* Alcaeus, of Meteline, who denounced the vengeance of Heaven against the Betrayers of their Country.

III.

Or like those bards of later years,
 Who tuned their lyres to British ears,
 With drued rage on every crime,
 Come thund'ring down in ruthless rhyme.

IV.

But who that Fortune's favour woos,
 Would court, oh, Swift! thy cynic Muse?
 Or, arm'd with Churchill's rougher lash,
 At vice with headlong fury dash?

V.

Some gentler sister of the Nine,
 Indulgent to my pray'r incline,
 And softly o'er my lute diffuse
 The balm of Flattery's genial dews.

VI.

In strains, like Gnatho's, teach my song,
 The pleasures which to wealth belong;
 The conscious joys which heave the breast,
 In braids of pearl and rubies drest:

VII.

The rapture-kindled blush that breaks,
 Like morning purple, o'er the cheeks
 Of some fair dame, when first she's led
 The courts of royalty to tread;

VIII. And

VIII.

And vain of wealth, of favour vain,
 With tofs contempt'ous smiles disdain,
 As pressing through the titled crowd
 She flaunts, of new-blown honours proud.

IX.

But why, my Muse, with vagrant wing
 Sweep'st thou this desultory string:
 Why not, like other Bards, aspire,
 Sublime to tune the Epic lyre?

X.

Behold bright subject for thy rhimes,
 A Heroine hastes from Indian climes,
 Like Dido, when her wealth she bore,
 To found a throne on Africk's shore.

XI.

'Tis Hastings! high in princely state,
 Hastings pre-eminently great;
 Who sweeps along the wat'ry plain,
 With half an empire in her train.

XII.

Full from the East auspicious gales,
 Exulting, swell her fluttering sails;
 While Ocean groans beneath the weight
 Of gold and iv'ry's precious freight.

XIII. Oh!

XIII.

Oh! spare the costly treasure, spare, dilute the vain and
 Ye Rulers of the billowey war, and cease to count
 The mighty plunder dearly bought, and cease to count
 By deeds beyond the reach of thought.

XIV.

Now on the beach with stately mein
 The Dame descends, in port a Queen;
 While in gay ranks on either side,
 Her train of liv'ri'd guards divide.

XV.

A gilded chariot now receives
 The great Sultana from the waves;
 And rolls in splendid pomp along,
 The pageant of a wond'ring throng.

XVI.

Next in long order, o'er the strand,
 Slow pacing, move her tawny band;
 Oppress'd with gifts in triumph spread,
 The chairs of state, the iv'ry bed.*

XVII.

Compar'd with which th' beauteous throne
 Where Israel's mighty Monarch thone,
 Were but a rude essay of art,
 So highly wrought each finish'd part!

XIII.

* Presents for her Majesty from Mrs. Hastings.

XVIII. The

XVIII.

The curtains rich with netted gold,
Devolve in many a floating fold;
Where glow in radiant tints sublime,
The blooms of India's genial clime.

XIX.

* Next in the splendid pageant shines,
(From Hindostan's exhaustless mines
† By theft purloin'd) that brilliant prize,
Which with meridian Phoebus vies.

XX.

Bright on the sable foil it plays,
And flings around ten thousand rays,
Out-beaming far the gem of old,
By Pitt to Gallic Lewis sold.

XXI.

Wealth flowing Albion's shores shall cease,
Thy Isle with bankrupt States compass'd;
Whose subjects now can gifts supply,
Which once thy Monarch could not buy.

* A present to his Majesty from Governor Hastings.

† In order to prevent any misinterpretation of the sentence, it is necessary to remind the reader, that the mines of Golconda belong to the Great Mogul, who reserves for his own use all the diamonds which will not pass through a certain sieve; consequently every gem of superior size must be purloined either by the miners, or the officers employed to sift them.

C

XXII. And

XXVII.

XXII.

And now to grace the stately train,
Spurning the ground in scorn disdain,
(For Monarch's only form'd to ride)
Two Barbs * are led in martial pride.

XXIII.

Not more renowned for matchless speed,
Those courfers of etherial breed,
By Rhesus to the thund'ring car,
Enyok'd to grace the Dardan war.

XXIV.

Their manes like curling billows flow;
Their bitts with gold and diamonds glow;
By reins of platted silk restrain'd,
Which thrice the Tyrian vats had drain'd.

XXV.

Strong rise their necks in graceful bend;
Their fiery nostrils wide extend;
And snuffing ev'ry gale on high,
They neigh defiance thro' the sky.

XXVI.

Next glit'ring on a high rais'd car,
To catch th' admiring gaze from far,
The Dame's regalia beams sublime,
Rich spoils of many a ransack'd clime.

* Presents to his Majesty from Governor Hastings.

XXVII. And

XXVII.

And costly robes all broider'd round,
 With pearls in farthest India found;
 Or studded, glorious to the view,
 With opals of each varying hue.

XXVIII.

Then pours profusely on the shore,
 * Lacks pil'd on lacks, a princely store;
 Millions of wealth, the spoils or bribes
 Of ravag'd India's royal tribes.

XXIX.

Proud stubborn tribes, who dar'd withhold
 Their long worn gems, their thrones of gold,
 Till from the scourge of war to save
 Their country, they their treasure gave.

XXX.

Oh, glorious Chiefs! what northern sphere
 Shall e'er such gen'rous Kings reverse
 As you, with patriot love replete,
 Who pour'd your stores at Hastings' feet!

XXXI.

Hastings, to whose triumphant Bride,
 Yet ling'ring near the billowey tide,
 The Muse returns, all proud to wait
 A duteous handmaid on her state;

* lacks of rupees.

XXXII. And

XXXII.

And listen with exulting soul,
As o'er the beach her axles roll,
To hear those pealing * thunders meet,
Which Kings and Heroes only greet.

XXXIII.

And now, in marshal'd order led,
While flow the lab'ring sumpters tread,
A liv'ried train on sprightly steeds,
The Dame's triumphal car precedes:

XXXIV.

And urge their speed, till white with foam,
They reach that far renowned Dome †,
Where many a princely guest can tell,
They found a Palace, not Hotel.

XXXV.

Yet for the Dame 'tis all too vile,
(Hastings, though in a northern isle,
Must find, where'er she turns her eyes,
The splendor of the Indies rise.

* It is said Mrs. Hastings was honoured on her landing with a grand salute from the batteries and ships in the harbour.

† The Inn at Newbury.

XXXVI. In

XXXVI.

In haste to grace her transient stay,
 The busy slaves their fright display,
 And from their posting waggons spread
 Carpets more worthy of her tread.

XXXVII.

Then from the walls their arras tear,
 And range in Eastern glory there,
 Wrought hangings, dazzling to behold,
 And sofas fring'd with waving gold.

XXXVIII.

Nor leave undeck'd the spacious board,
 But high with costly viands stor'd,
 Gay porc'line spread, from Nanking brought,
 All high with gold and azure wrought.

XXXIX.

Then for the hasty banquet pour,
 In chrystal urns, the sparkling store,
 Rich tears of the Madeiran vine,
 Twice mellow'd by the glowing Line.

XL.

At length the panting scouts proclaim

The near approaches of the Dame,

Whose rapid wheels impetuous bound,

So swift they scarcely print the ground.

D

XLI. And

XLII.

XLIII. XX

XIV. XX

XX

The next approach of the U.S.

XLV. Next

So fast they scarcely print the ground.

XLIV.

Next in her glitt'ring Palace view,
Wealth that might barter half Peru,
In gay magnificence display'd,
For pomp of state, or beauty's aid:—

XLVI.

While to her crouded levy fleet,
Director, Nabob, Statesman, Peer,
In haste th' illustrious Dame to greet,
And breathe their homage at her feet:

XLVII.

And now loud rattling towards her gate,
The P—em—r's chariot rolls in state,
While perch'd behind four liveried laquais,
The pride of full-blown power discloses:

XLVIII.

Alighted now, while first remain
In glittering files the turban'd train,
Two slaves of higher rank proceed,
In state the pompous guest to lead:

XLIX.

And as each grand saloon they tread,
With Persian carpets richly spread,
With hangings deck'd whose costly pile
Might well emble some royal bride:

L. While

LIX

While from their lofty domes descend,
Lustres that with the sun contend
In beaming glory; o'er the soul,
Of gazing P——t, what transports roll?

LIX

He views, exulting in the thought,
The wealth from plunder'd India brought;
And hopes some future day may yield,
To him the spoils of such a field.

LIX

At length thro' many a chamber past,
The ante-room receives at last
Th' illustrious guest; and op'ning spread
The doors which to the closet lead.

LIX

No favour'd Prince, of whom we're told
In tales Arabian Bards unfold
When led by Fays at midnight hour
To view their Queen's resplendent bower,

LIX

More rapture shew'd, or more surprize,
Than sparkled in the Statesman's eyes,
While now their glance at once explores
The wealth of Ind's impoverish'd shores

LV.

A while in fancy wrapt, he deems
 The noon arriv'd, whose golden beams,
 Thus on his glitt'ring gems shall play,
 And meet from each a rival ray.

LVI.

Now Hastings rising from her throne,
 (For sure like one the sofa shone)
 All gracious deigns her form to bend,
 And hail him as her husband's friend;

LVII.

Then on a couch superbly graced
 With tissued velvet as she placed
 Th' admiring youth, in strains sublime,
 Rich as the flow of eastern rhyme;

LVIII.

Or buskin'd heroines, when by rules
 Declaiming of Stagiran schools,
 The fair embassadess declares
 Those greetings from her Lord she bears.

LIX.

Then smiling cries, "Oh, P—t! behold
 Yon curtains deep-festoon'd with gold;
 These costly slabs Lazulian vein'd,
 On tails of burnish'd snakes sustain'd;

E

LX. That

LX.

That tap'stry by the needle wrought,
 With wealth of ransom'd Monarchs bought;
 These porcel'ain jars whence sweets diffuse;
 This chrystal urn which drops with dews,

LXI.

From roses in their prime distill'd;
 These caskets rich, with treasure fill'd,
 Pearls, corals, shells, from Ocean's caves
 Selected, or the Gangean waves.

LXII.

These (she exclaim'd, while high her breast,
 The rapture heaving soul confess)
 To thy auspicious influence due,
 Must oft this grateful theme renew.

LXIII.

For, oh! (she cry'd, with lifted eyes,
 And hands appealing to the skies)
 What now had been my Warren's fate;
 What now his beggar'd widow's state;

LXIV.

But that thy pow'r in Friendship's cause,
 The rage restrain'd of ruthless laws?
 Those laws which none beneath the throne,
 Could dare oppose save P—t alone.

LXV. Hostile

LXV.

Hostile had'st thou, great Chief, arose,
Dread leader of inquiring foes,
E'en G—t had breath'd among their train
His golden arguments in vain.

LXVI.

And all this wealth by Hastings stor'd,
Been swift to Britain's coffers pour'd;
Nor left one Jagier to sustain,
My lonely life's afflicted wane.

LXVII.

And still full oft with fell controul,
Distracting terrors rack my soul,
Left, transient as a meteor's blaze,
Shou'd shine the splendor of my days:

LXVIII.

For rang'd full firm in phalanx stand,
With strength renew'd, yon veteran band,
To shake by fierce assaults again,
The basis of our Indian reign.

LXIX.

Again in fancy on mine ear,
Loud burst the thunders of their war,
And now, methinks, transfix'd with dread,
My Hastings to their bar is led."

LXX. "Dispel

LXX.

" Dispel those fears (great P—t resum'd)
First be the British throne intom'd,
Deep in the central rocks that pile,
The strong foundations of our Isle.

LXXI.

First shall the waves which lash our shore,
High o'er the loftiest mountains roar;
And of Britannia's ancient fame,
Leave but the record of a name.

LXXII.

No :—though in F—x's head-strong band,
The noblest sons of Britain stand,
From India's unexhausted store,
We'll draw the golden nerves of war;

LXXIII.

Till bound and trembling in our toil,
The patriot Hydra we incoil,
And crush those stubborn chiefs who tread
The paths wherein their fires have bled.

LXXIV.

Then shall their factious legions feel,
The force of Fortune's adverse wheel;
While tax on tax their coffers drain,
Enriching those who forg'd their chain.

LXXV. Then

LXXV.

Then shall triumphant Hastings stand,
With pow'r, with honours at command;
Trampling the neck of each bold slave,
Who dares him to the ordeal brave.

LXXVI.

While thou, illustrious Dame, shalt shine,
Where e'er thy fancy may incline;
Alike rever'd if thou resort,
To Britain's, or thine Indian Court."

Eliza Ryves

END OF THE FIRST CANTO.

(21)

LXXV.

Then shall the English Hastings stand,
With bow, with honours at command;
Tripping the neck of each bold slave,
Who dares him to the ordinal brave.

LXXVI.

While thou, illustrious of that line,
Where'er thy hand is, thou shalt find
Alike rever'd if thou be a king,
To Britain's, or to India's King.



END OF THE FIRST CANTO.